

Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 AID-20 PC-10 CU-05 A-01 M-02 OPR-02 SCS-03

SCA-01 DRC-01 IO-14 NIC-01 OMB-01 OC-06 CCO-00 INRE-00

/141 W

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O 060634Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4807

INFO USIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC

SECDEF WSSHDC

DIA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY

AMCONSUL UDORN PRIORITY

13TH ADVON UDORN

USSAG NAKHON PHANOM

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 10947

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINS, ASEC, TH

SUBJECT: CONTINUED URBAN VIOLENCE

REF: A) BANGKOK 10933

B) BANGKOK 10935

C) BANGKOK 10936 (NOTAL)

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D) BANGKOK 10937 (NOTAL)

E) FBIS D052340Z JULY 74
F) FBIS D051650Z JULY 74
G) FBIS D060034Z JULY 74
H) FBIS D060535Z JULY 74
I) FBIS D051419Z JULY 74

BEGIN SUMMARY:

URBAN VIOLENCE ON A SLIGHTLY REDUCED SCALE SWIRLED THROUGH THE STREETS AROUND THE PHLAPPHLACHAI POLICE STATION IN A CHINESE SECTION OF BANGKOK FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT EVENING. THE CABINET MET BUT DID NOT IMPOSE A CURFEW. RADIO AND TV COVERAGE IS FACTUAL; NEWSPAPERS ARE PLAYING UP CASUALTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. FOR THE THIRD STRAIGHT EVENING THE NEIGHBORHOOD SHOOT-OUT BETWEEN THAI POLICE AND YOUNG CHINESE CONTINUED IN THE AREA AROUND THE PHLAPPHLACHAI POLICE STATION (REF. E) THE VIOLENCE STARTED EARLIER AND SUBSIDED SOONER THAN ON PREVIOUS EVENINGS.

2. THE CABINET MET IN THE EARLY EVENING OF JULY 5. AFTER THE MEETING ENDED AT 2030 LOCAL TIME, PRIME MINISTER SANYA HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE IN WHICH HE CALLED FOR CALM AND ASKED PEOPLE TO STAY INDOORS. HE REITERATED THAT THE GOVERNMENT INTENDED TO PUT DOWN THE RIOTING, BUT HAD DECIDED NOT TO DECLARE A CURFEW. THE PRIME MINISTER ADMITTED THAT MISUNDERSTANDINGS OR "FEELINGS OF HATRED AGAINST POLICEMEN", MAY HAVE FUELED THE DISTURBANCES. HE INDICATED THAT THE POLICE WERE TAKING STRONG MEASURES, AT GOVERNMENT ORDERS AND TO PROTECT THEIR FAMILIES LIVING IN THE SAME COMPOUND WITH THE PHLACUJHACHAI STATION. THEY PUBLICLY BLAMED TWO HOODLUM GANGS AS RESPONSIBLE FOR EXACERBATING THE SITUATION (REF. F).

3. THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED RADIO ANNOUNCED AT 2025 LOCAL TIME JULY 5 CASUALTY FIGURES OF 25 PERSONS KILLED AND 124 INJURED. MOST RADIO AND TV REPORTS HAVE BEEN FACTUAL AND UNEXAGGERATED. THERE HAS BEEN NO TELEVISION COVERAGE OF NIGHT ACTION, NOR OF CASUALTIES. THE THAI
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PRESS, HOWEVER, IS GIVING EXTENSIVE PICTURE COVERAGE TO CASUALTIES AND POLICE ACTIONS. EDITORIAL COMMENT IS RUNNING STRONGLY AGAINST THE RIOTS (REF. G). REF. H CONTAINS A GOOD ANALYSIS OF SOME OF THE FACTORS BEHIND THE RIOTING.

4. THE GOVERNMENT SECURITY STRATEGY IS TO PLACE POLICE REINFORCEMENTS, INCLUDING BORDER PATROL POLICE, INTO THE

AREA DURING THE EVENING HOURS, AND WITHDRAW THEM DURING THE DAY. ARMY UNITS REMAIN CONGREGATED NEAR GOVERNMENT OFFICE BUILDINGS OVER ONE AND A HALF MILES FROM THE CENTER OF THE RIOT AREA. THE GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATED FULLY ITS SERIOUS INTENT TO PUT DOWN THE RIOTING BY ADDING THE COMMANDERS OF THE NAVY AND AIR FORCE, AND THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF TO THE LIST OF OFFICIALS EMPOWERED TO EXERCISE STATE OF EMERGENCY POWERS (REF. I).

5. THE ASSISTANT ARMY ATTACHE VISITED THE RIOT AFFECTED AREA ON THE MORNING OF JULY 6, AND REPORTED LESS DEBRIS THAN BEFORE. THERE WAS LITTLE EVIDENCE OF THE POLICE AT THAT TIME. HE ALSO REPORTED THAT WHILE THE ARMY TACTICAL COMMANDERS ARE AT THEIR POSTS, SENIOR STAFF OFFICERS CONTINUE TO ENJOY THE LONG HOLIDAY WEEKEND.

6. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE THAT THE CONFRONTATION WILL SPUTTER ON FOR ANOTHER EVENING OR TWO, BUT DO NOT AT PRESENT ANTICIPATE THAT VIOLENCE WILL SPREAD OR THAT THE SITUATION WILL PRECIPITATE A GOVERNMENT CRISIS.
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